

A.T. Loan News

Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation

January 2003

Volume 5

Giving Credit Where ... by Jason Jones

Fifth Third Bank lenders recognized for partnership with KATLC

The Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation (KATLC) would not be very successful without the dedication and leadership of its partners. With that in mind, it is always good when those partners are recognized for their efforts in helping Kentuckians with disabilities.

The Cabinet for Workforce Development (CWD) is the latest to honor the efforts of Barry Grey and Greg Tudor of Fifth Third Bank of Kentucky. Barry and Greg are no strangers to this kind of recognition since beginning their partnership with the KATLC in July 2000. The Department of Vocational Rehabilitation also recognized them back in May 2002 at its Statewide Training Conference.

The CWD presented Fifth Third the Partnerships Award in recognition of contributions by employees of another state agency, local program, university, federal government, private industry that provides an invaluable service to the Cabinet.

The following is what the CWD had to say about Fifth Third: *From the beginning, staff members at Fifth Third have been enthusiastic,*

cooperative and flexible in dealing with the customers with special needs. Bank officials have been willing to work with the applicants on an individual basis, modifying eligibility requirements for loans in an effort to fit the unique needs of the applicants. Bank staff have shown remarkable flexibility in how they deal with borrowers who might have temporary problems in meeting their contract obligations. The bank has also lowered its normal processing fees for borrowers to reduce the overall costs of loans.

Fifth Third officials have shown great interest in learning more about low interest assistive technology loan programs. The bank sent two staff members to a national conference in Washington, D.C., to discover how the program works and ways to effectively implement the program in Kentucky.

Loan officers Barry Grey and Greg Tudor have been the individuals whose flexibility, cooperation and high level of interest have made the program an enormous success.



(Left to right) CWD Secretary Allen Rose, Barry Grey and Greg Tudor of Fifth Third Bank of Kentucky and the Governor's Cabinet Deputy Secretary Ed Ford.

Listen Up by Jason Jones

Hearing aids becoming largest market of potential consumers

Did you know that a hearing aid can cost between \$1000-\$3000? Did you know that private health insurance, as well as Medicare and Medicaid, will not cover the cost of a hearing aid?

Although there is a push to introduce legislation to change such restrictions on coverage, as of now the cost rests 100 percent on the shoulders of the consumer. With this in mind, the KATLC decided to approach hearing aid vendors across Kentucky to offer assistance. The result has been the largest number of referrals from any one disability

population in the history of the corporation.

The first loan for a hearing aid was issued August 22, 2002 after Dr. G.B. Cummins of Somerset referred one of his consumers to the KATLC for consideration. Since that date, the KATLC and Fifth Third Bank have processed 21 loan applications for hearing aids and approved almost half of them. Inquiries about that type of loan are up considerably as well.

Patty Conway, state coordinator of deaf services for the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation says it best. "How important is communication to you? For someone who is hard-of-hearing, a hearing aid is critical for everything they do that requires communicating with the rest of the world."



The Purpose

The Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation (KATLC) offers low interest loans through its lending partners (Fifth Third Bank and Kentucky Housing Corporation) for qualified applicants who need any type of equipment or home modification that will increase a person's mobility or enable them to become more independent.

Whether it's a wheelchair, modified van, or accessible entry to a home, people with disabilities are often faced with a costly and oftentimes immediate need that Medicaid or other types of health insurance programs do not cover. These types of costs are not usually considered a "good risk" by most lending institutions.

Guidelines for approval are not as strict as other lending programs. We understand that credit history is often limited or poor due to long-term medical expenses. In order to see if you qualify, complete an application, attach the required documents and mail it to KATLC at P.O. Box 12231, Lexington, KY 40581-2231.

For more information or to receive an application call Nancy Hansen toll free at 1-877-675-0195.

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More "Real Choices" by Dave Matheis

KATLC gets boost from home modification grant

In September of 2001, the Kentucky Cabinet for Health Services received a three-year grant from the Federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 'to help (Kentucky) design and implement effective and enduring improvements in community long term support systems to enable children and adults of any age who have disabilities or long term illnesses to live and participate in their communities.'

Entitled Real Choices Systems Change, the grant created a pilot program with the Center for Accessible Living in Louisville and Murray to coordinate and provide adequate supports for individuals with severe disabilities to live as independently as possible in the living environment of their choice.

As part of the program, a total of \$45,000 was set aside in each year of the grant to provide assistance for individuals with home modifications. In a truly collaborative effort, Lou Kurtz, the administrator at the cabinet responsible for the grant worked with the Kentucky Housing Corporation (KHC) and KATLC to distribute these funds through their existing low interest loan program for home modifications.

Through the agreement between the Cabinet for Health Services, KHC and KATLC, the \$45,000 would be used to provide outright grants to individuals for a maximum of \$5,000. If any modification cost more than that amount, the individual could obtain a low interest loan for the balance. The Center for Accessible Living and KATLC would work together on processing the applications.

The Center began accepting applications during the summer of 2002. By December, the \$90,000 allotted for the first two years of the grant had been distributed. As it turned out, no application was over \$5,000. The remaining \$45,000 will be available beginning in September of 2003.

The speed with which the applications were received indicates the great need for assistance in home modifications in the state. Unfortunately, it also indicates that many individuals who need the modifications cannot afford loans, despite the minimal income qualifications and low interest rate (4 percent) offered by KHC. Over the next two years, KATLC will work with its partners in the Real Choices grant to investigate creative and innovative ways to meet this great need.

KATLC WordFind

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| A | C | C | E | S | S | I | B | L | E | N | C | Z | K | R |
| D | I | S | A | B | I | L | I | T | I | E | S | G | V | Z |
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| N | O | I | T | A | T | I | L | I | B | A | H | E | R | F |
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Find 16 words or phrases located in the above puzzle. Words are located in the three stories in this newsletter. The first correctly completed puzzle mailed to Nancy Hansen at P.O. Box 12231; Lexington, KY 40581-2231. Winner will receive a mouse pad and coffee mug. Please include your name and address with entry. Good luck!

A. T. Loan News is a publication of the Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation (KATLC).

Principal partners of the KATLC include: Fifth Third Bank, Kentucky Housing Corporation, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, Kentucky Developmental Disabilities Council, KATS Network and the Interdisciplinary Human Development Institute at the University of Kentucky.

The Kentucky Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion or marital status in employment, or provision of services and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in all program activities.

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(Jason Jones, editor)